



October 20, 1997

Superfund Fact Sheet

Tacoma Landfill

3510 South Mullen Street

Tacoma, Washington

The City of Tacoma requests extended operation of the Tacoma Landfill through the year 2004. The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Washington Department of Ecology, and the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department would like to hear your comments on the City's request.

Public Comment Period

October 24 to November 24, 1997

The City of Tacoma has requested that the EPA and Ecology allow extended operation of a 31-acre portion of the Tacoma Landfill for five years after the current closure deadline of December 31, 1999. This means that, if approved, the City would continue placing refuse in the 31-acre central area of the landfill until the end of 2004.

The EPA, the Washington Department of Ecology, and the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department will be evaluating the request for the extension and would like your comments on this request. **The public comment period runs from October 24 through November 24, 1997.** A copy of the City's proposal is available for your review at the locations listed in the back of this fact sheet. A public hearing has also been scheduled where the City will present its reasons for requesting the extension and how it intends to meet environmental protection requirements. At the hearing, the agencies will invite public comment on the City's request.

You can comment at the public hearing or send written comments to:

Bob Kievit, EPA Project Manager
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
300 Desmond Drive, Suite 102
Lacey, WA 98503
FAX #(360) 753-8080

***Public Hearing
Foss High School "Little Theater"
2112 South Tyler
Tacoma, WA
November 6, 1997
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.***

Background Information

The Tacoma Landfill was added to EPA's National Priorities List (NPL) of sites requiring further investigation and cleanup in 1983 as part of the "Commencement Bay South Tacoma Channel" site. The landfill has been the subject of investigation and significant cleanup work under EPA and Ecology authorities since 1986. These investigations showed that the landfill was causing contamination of area ground water with volatile organic compounds and was generating landfill gas (methane) that could be dangerous to the surrounding community.

In 1988, EPA made a decision to take steps to clean up the landfill. After arriving at the cleanup decision, EPA and Ecology proceeded to negotiate with the City of Tacoma to conduct the cleanup. Negotiations resulted in a Consent Decree.

The provisions of the final Consent Decree require the City to:

1) Reduce the production of leachate, which is rainwater that has come in contact with refuse, by placing constraints on further site operations and by capping the landfill.

Current Status - Capping of the old portion of the landfill was completed in 1992. The capping has significantly reduced the production of leachate by preventing rainwater from seeping through the buried refuse. However, rainwater continues to seep through the refuse placed in the central area, which is still receiving waste. Leachate from the central area is captured and treated by the municipal sewage treatment plant.

2) Eliminate off-site gas migration through a gas extraction system.

Current Status - The landfill gas management system was completed in 1988 and enhanced several times since then. The current system contains more than 300 gas extraction wells and two flare stations where the gas is destroyed.

3) Prevent further migration of the contaminated ground water plume and reduce the concentration of contaminants within the plume via a ground water extraction and treatment system.

Current Status - The ground water extraction and treatment system was completed in 1993 and enhanced in 1996 and 1997. The current system includes 22 extraction wells along the western boundary of the landfill and 13 extraction wells along Leach Creek. The extracted water is treated at the landfill and discharged into the sanitary sewer system for disposal.

4) Further protect public health and the environment through monitoring of ground water, surface water, subsurface gas, and air emissions.

Current Status - Approximately 75 ground water monitoring wells, 130 gas monitoring wells, and three locations along Leach Creek are included in the current landfill monitoring program. Air emissions from the landfill gas flare stations and from the

ground water treatment system were tested in 1992 and again in 1997.

5) Provide an alternate water supply to any residents deprived of their domestic water supply due to contamination from the landfill.

Current Status - Affected residents have been connected to the Tacoma municipal water system. Other ground water supply wells that receive ground water after it passes the landfill are regularly monitored to determine that they remain free of landfill contaminants.

6) Establish institutional controls to promote and support the cleanup action. Institutional controls are locally enforced regulations designed to ensure the integrity of the cleanup and prevent recontamination at the site.

Current Status - An Institutional Control Plan was conditionally approved by EPA and Ecology in 1992. The City is working to satisfy the conditions of approval.

The Consent Decree required the City to close the last open portion of the landfill (the central area) for landfill operation by the end of 1999. However, the Decree allows for extensions to this deadline of up to a combined 15 years in increments of no longer than five years each if the City meets the following conditions:

1) the continued operation of the landfill not result in a release or substantial threat of release of hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants to the environment;

2) the performance standards for the ground water extraction/treatment system be achieved;

3) the City of Tacoma has instituted and is operating an aggressive solid waste recycling and hazardous materials collection program; and

4) other feasible solid waste management alternatives to disposal at the landfill do not exist.

At the public hearing, the City will present how it intends to meet these conditions.

Five-Year Reviews

Under Superfund Law and the Consent Decree, five-year reviews must be conducted of the landfill cleanup to ensure that the cleanup that was done remains protective of human health and the environment. The first five-year review for the landfill has been completed and the document is available for review at the following locations.

Information Repositories

***Tacoma Main Public Library
1102 Tacoma Avenue, South
Northwest Room
Tacoma, WA***

***Citizens for a Healthy Bay
771 Broadway
Tacoma, WA***

***U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Sixth Avenue
7th Floor Records Center
Seattle, WA***

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you have questions about the Tacoma Landfill cleanup, please contact one of the following:

Bob Kievit
EPA Project Manager
(360) 753-9014

Jeanne O'Dell
EPA Community Relations Coordinator
(206) 553-6919

or call EPA's toll free number 1-800-424-4327

Christopher Maurer
Ecology Project Manager
(360) 407-7223

Dawne Chapman
Ecology Public Involvement
(360) 407-7233

Andy Comstock
Tacoma Pierce County Health Department
(253) 798-6538

For those with impaired hearing or speech, please contact EPA's telecommunication device for the hearing impaired (TDD) at (206) 553-1698. To ensure effective communication with everyone, additional services can be made available to persons with disabilities by contacting one of the EPA numbers listed above.



United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Region 10 (ECO-081)
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle WA 98101

BULK RATE
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
U.S. EPA
Permit No. G-35

SUPERFUND FACT SHEET
Tacoma Landfill - Public Comment Period
Tacoma, WA